

Abstract

An apparatus and method for transporting containers to be processed in a manufacturing operation includes a transfer assembly that transfers containers from a load area on an upstream conveyor assembly to a discharge on downstream conveyor assembly for further processing. The upstream conveyor assembly may include longitudinally extending first and second conveyors oriented at an angle to one another. The transfer assembly may include a rotating wheel that picks containers from a chute and moves them, one at a time, to the downstream conveyor assembly. The downstream conveyor assembly may be in the form of an elevator that has bays that are sized to receive individual containers. The bays are formed by vanes on a moving belt. The method includes steps inherent in the structure, including receiving a bulk supply of containers, moving them horizontally, columnizing them into a single file, elevating them and thereafter discharging them.